

Series I  
Correspondence,  
1932-1973

Box 1, Folder 14

July 21, 1943 -  
October 24, 1943

Frame: 0461

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO. CALIFORNIA

21 July 1943

Rear Admiral William S. Pye, U.S.N.,  
President, Naval War College,  
Newport, Rhode Island.

Dear Admiral:

I took command of the U.S.S. Minneapolis yesterday and she was in the exact location which you had forecast to me and of which I had been informed by Commander Chanler. I am afraid I will be in the location referred to for some time to come because of delay in receiving certain material which we require. I could have well remained and conducted the next class at the college - that is the U. S. Staff College Class - and still have had plenty of time to arrive here.

My trip across the continent was a very simple one and I thoroughly enjoyed it. We passed the first night in New York and then I went to the A.A.A. in the Pennsylvania Hotel on Tuesday morning to get some strip maps of the highway. These maps were given to me graciously by the A.A.A., although I am not a member now, and I found them very useful indeed.

I left New York on Tuesday morning about 10 o'clock and made stops every night as follows: On July 6 at Pittsburgh, after having traveled 577 miles from Newport; on July 7 at Peoria, Illinois, after having traveled that day 575 miles; on July 8 at Grand Island, Nebraska, having traveled 513 miles; on July 9 at Parko, Wyoming, having traveled 540 miles; on July 10 at Elko, Nevada, having traveled 566 miles; and on July 11 at Fallen Leaf Lodge, Lake Tahoe, having traveled about 325 miles. The last day, Monday, I drove 185 miles. A total distance of 3,281 miles was covered and my average mileage was about 17 miles per gallon. I am mentioning this in detail so that should other officers desire to go to the coast along this same route they can have the information. Although I covered a lot of miles, it also took a lot of hours because at first I tried to remain within the law, but I soon found that, after getting out of the Pennsylvania restricted oil belt, there seemed to be little interest on the part of anyone to maintain any speed limit whatsoever. In fact, I think it was in Eastern Iowa, I got between two busses on a narrow highway and had to make 60 miles per hour to keep up, and after about an hour of this I managed to get out from between them and confined my speed to 50 miles per hour or less. I saw a considerable amount of traffic

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

21 July 1943

across the continent, although there were great open spaces where no traffic was seen at all. The Middle West and even the Far West has little conception of the hardships which are undergone by the people in the New England states in regard to tires and gas. I am afraid if the New Englanders could see the way the cars in the Middle West and West all operated they would raise their voices to high heaven. There seems to be a great abundance of gasoline and everyone was driving around merrily. The ration board, I understand, and O.P.A. likewise, have taken some action but it certainly can not be very severe. There seems to be a shortage of farm machinery in the farm belt as I noticed with interest that a great many horses are being used on the farms, but I also noticed that the crops were good and that the cattle, horses and hogs, are looking fat and even sleek. So at least we can feel satisfied that in the farm belt, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, etc., there is plenty of food.

The food across the continent in my mind was distinctly inferior. I tried good hotels and restaurants wherever I went and I can truthfully say that I did not consider that I received anything really good except at the Vanderbilt Hotel in New York and now in California. I tried one steak in the steak country and it wasn't much, so in the end I resorted to ham and eggs which seemed to hold up pretty well across the nation. My suggestion along that line would be that no one should be too expectant of what they may get in the ration line around this route, although somewhat later in the year when the fresh crops are being harvested a marked change might be noted.

There are a number of changes going on in my new command which would be of interest to you. One has to do with the value of intelligence. An intelligence center is being built up which I think will go a long way toward solving the question which you so strongly stressed and which I so thoroughly believe in. I will find out what information I can release in a letter of this nature and will write you more about it when I am more familiar with it. I talked it over today with some of the yard people and I feel that I almost know more about it than they know, which is a strange situation.

I am very happy where I am and I look forward to getting to sea as soon as possible. I am almost as anxious to get there from here as I was from there and I know that you can readily understand that. I want you to know again in writing how much

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

21 July 1943

I appreciated the privilege of serving with you at the War College. Everyone realizes that you are the only officer in the Navy who should have been President of the College and every one of us felt that we were heavily profiting by associating with you. As I have said before, I can't imagine any duty I have enjoyed heretofore as much as I have the War College and I can only feel that any officer who feels otherwise must be sadly lacking in mental perception.

Please remember me very kindly to Mrs. Pye, for whom I have a very deep regard, and also to the other officers of the staff with whom I have been so happily associated during these past several years.

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

0465

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

21 July 1943.

Mrs. Ray Steele,  
Wendover, Utah.

Dear Mrs. Steele:

I have written a letter to Mr. Lamas and I am likewise writing this one to you to thank you for your friendly interest in obtaining for me a tire from the ration board. As I have told Mr. Lamas, the tire proved to be absolutely essential as I obtained a slow flat that same night on the highway toward Elko.

I was distressed to hear of your misfortune in losing your brother at Pearl Harbor and I deeply admire your courage and fortitude in bearing up as you have done under such a terrific loss. The women of our nation in time of war bear a heavy burden and our success in action hinges in a great part upon them.

Once again let me say that it was very kind of you to understand my position as well as you did and I shall always feel indebted to you and Mr. Lamas for your immediate action in my behalf.

Very truly yours,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

0466

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

21 July 1943.

Mr. Brian Lamas,  
Wendover, Utah.

My dear Mr. Lamas:

This is merely a note to express to you my appreciation of your courtesy as the head of the ration board at Wendover for your kindness in getting me a new tire. Very frankly, had you not done so I feel that I would not have arrived here on time. This is because of the fact that after leaving Wendover and after having gone over roughly 60 miles in the direction of Elko, I was practically forced off the road by what seemed to be a triple truck running about 60 miles per hour which took the entire highway and forced me off. This occurred about 0030 in the morning, which means about 30 minutes after midnight. The result of this action was that another one of my tires got flat, and had I not had the spare I should have starved to death in the desert.

So you may consider that you not only did a friendly and patriotic act in assigning me this new tire but also you probably saved both Mr. Chaney and myself from having to park out in the desert for sometime.

Thank you sir!

Very truly yours,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

21 July 1943.

Time Magazine,  
Circulation Manager,  
330 East 22nd Street,  
Chicago 16, Illinois.

Gentlemen:

Please change my address from Naval War College,  
Newport, Rhode Island, to U.S.S. Minneapolis, c/o Fleet  
Post Office, San Francisco, California.

Very truly yours,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

21 July 1943.

National Geographic Society,  
Washington, D.C.

Gentlemen:

Please change my address from Naval War College,  
Newport, Rhode Island, to U.S.S. Minneapolis, c/o Fleet  
Post Office, San Francisco, California.

Very truly yours,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

0469



U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

21 July 1943.

Chief Clerk,  
Naval War College,  
Newport, Rhode Island.

My dear Whittier:

I am returning to you gasoline ration tickets No. 508 to 515 inclusive and also No. 328. I used all other ration tickets in order to arrive here on the west coast.

Please convey to all the office force my satisfaction at having been associated with such an able organization and tell them that now and then we will label a salvo "Civilian Staff, Naval War College" and that ought to knock the Japs flat.

With many thanks to you for your courtesy to me in the past, I am,

Very truthfully yours,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

0470

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

23 July 1943

Dear Tom:

I hope a letter from me will not startle you too much but as you know I am now in command of the U.S.S. Minneapolis. We are undergoing a rather comprehensive overhaul and, once the job has been completed, we shall be in a very fine shape.

The ship, however, has been practically out of operations since the time of it's casualty and therefore is somewhat lacking in training. Likewise, most of the younger officers and about one-third of the men have been transferred. All of this of course is quite familiar to you.

I presume, therefore, that upon departure from the yard we shall be given some sort of a shakedown cruise which will include gunnery training and firing of all types in order that all hands may become familiar not only with the old equipment but also with the new.

The yard says that it has been customary for you to assign a training period to ships upon leaving the yard and a locality. Could you advise me at this early date as to what training period you contemplate for us, the locality where we will train and approximately what practices you desire us to conduct.

I noticed that my recent associate, Jimmy Carter, is assigned to your staff and I presume again that he is going to relieve you. If so, "quo vadis".

I can not begin to tell you how delighted I am with my setup here and how very anxious I am to get into operation status again so that the Minneapolis can perform her full share of the responsibility involving the Navy in the Pacific.

With best regards to everyone I know on the staff. I remain as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

Capt. Thomas J. Keliher, Jr., USN,  
Operations Officer, Staff,  
Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet,  
c/o Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California.

0471

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

23 July 1943

Dear Gus:

It appears as if my insurance policies expired on 19 July and I am anxious to renew them immediately. I do not know whether I shall sell my car soon or not, but should I do so a notification to you should be sufficient for you, I trust, to effect cancellation.

Please indicate to me at once that I am covered for the following: Fire, collision, \$50 deductable, theft, etc. If these are included in the term "comprehensive", then that is what I desire. Heretofore I think that such insurance has been carried by you in the Federal Insurance Company. Likewise, I desire to be insured for liability as heretofore indicated in my London Lancashire Indemnity policy. Here I had bodily injury of 25 to 50 thousand, and I had property damage for \$5,000. If you think that in view of the fact that my car is on the coast you think I should insure on the coast, I will do so, and that is another reason why I request you inform me immediately as to the status of my insurance.

I need not say I miss Newport very much and in particular I miss the many friends I had the fortune to make during the three years of my residence there, not the least of whom were Gus and Fanny. Time flies so rapidly that I feel that it won't be very long before I will be able to have the privilege of seeing you all again.

I am quite worried about my billiard game because there seems to be no billiards here at sea. This might be a surprise to members and Bogert, who is even a greater kidder than I am.

The weather in this area is perfectly swell and almost exactly similar to that that preceded my departure from Newport, although on my day of departure it rained rather heavily, which led me to believe that even the heavens were disappointed in the changes being made around the War College.

Frankly I couldn't be happier than I am now at sea and I look forward to the days in the future when we shall make contact with the enemy and make them realize that the Minneapolis is at sea again. This is a fine ship and a fine command, and I think that the Department did me a very good favor when they gave me this opportunity.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

23 July 1943

I sent you and Fanny a picture of myself when I left which I hope you safely received. It may not be too good but I think that it is much better than those taken by your Ernst Studio. I hope that it meets with your approval.

Best regards as always.

Yours most sincerely,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

Mr. Gustave J. S. White,  
37 Bellevue Avenue,  
Newport, Rhode Island.

0473

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

29 July 1943

Sir:

Last evening I dined in the Mural Room of the Hotel St. Francis, arriving at about a quarter to eight and completed my dinner at about nine o'clock. I was accompanied by a fellow officer.

Upon the completion of the dinner I was given a check for \$8.40 for my dinner, and I feel quite satisfied that this must have been in error. I did not notice the bill at the time as I was busy with some other matter and it was merely upon driving home and looking at this check that I realized the charge.

The dinner of my friend and myself consisted of:

- (a) One cocktail each.
- (b) Two lambchops each.
- (c) One order broccoli each.
- (d) One order French Fries each.
- (e) One order ice cream for one officer only.
- (f) One order black coffee for one officer only.

My estimate of the above charges are about as follows:  
(total for each)

(a) Cocktail	\$1.00
(b) Lambchops	2.50
(c) Broccoli	1.00
(d) French Fries	.80
(e) Ice cream	.40
(f) Coffee	.25
(g) Bread and butter	.25
Total of \$6.20	

Very frankly the above figures represent the maximum charge that could possibly have been made as it is quite probable that the lambchops were considerably less expensive than indicated here. It was my understanding that there is no cover charge and therefore it would appear as if some mistake had been made and I had been over-charged not less than \$2.00.

0474

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

29 July 1943

I have been associated over many years with the Hotel St. Francis, and have always found it superior in every way and always reasonable.

Last night I found the same conditions existing with the exception of the word "reasonable", which in my mind should be changed to read "unreasonable". The service was first class and the waiter that looked out for us was very good indeed.

In order that I not carry away with me a false impression of the St. Francis Mural Room, I am addressing this letter with the hope that a mistake has been made in my charges.

Very truly yours,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

The Manager,  
Hotel St. Francis,  
San Francisco, Calif.

0475

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

31 July 1943.

Dear Captain Crosby:

As you probably know by now, as I have written a letter to Admiral Pye, I am with my new command and am extremely happy over it. I presume that you know exactly where we are and why, so I can imagine you can realize how much longer we may be here. My only comment is that it would be too long.

We are working pretty hard to get things shipshape and this is a joint job in that we are working both materially and mentally. Along the latter line it struck me that it would be nice if I could obtain from you, for temporary use, one copy of the "Fleets", both U.S. and Japan, a copy of the latest "fire effect" tables, and a staff solution of both strategic and tactical problems. With these I should be able to put across some ideas which I am holding in my head for the present.

I should like to obtain also the following:

- (a) One copy of the various speeches with which I was connected, such as the Nature of Naval Warfare.
- (b) A copy of the lectures which I delivered before the Staff College on (1) Anti-Aircraft Defense (2) Weather and it's effect on Naval Operations (3) Search.
- (c) A copy of the lectures by Captain Todd on the sea areas of the Aleutians and Eastern Pacific might also be very useful.

I realize that it is not customary to release these but as I worked on most of them myself, it seems rather reasonable that I might be able to profit by them.

I can not begin to say too strongly how thoroughly I enjoyed my duty at the War College. There is no doubt in my mind but that the War College is performing a most vital function in the national defense and I hope that every one of you there at the War College feel just that. I know that a lot of officers on the staff are very anxious to get to sea and I don't blame them one damn bit. Certainly I feel much better since I have reported here than I had heretofore.

No one could have been nicer to me and more thoughtful regarding my own interest than you and Mrs. Crosby and I want you to know how thoroughly I appreciate this fact. You personally are a fine Chief of Staff with the most understanding view of your, shall we call them, professors? I have certainly enjoyed serving with you. Best regards as always,

R. W. BATES.

Captain H.H. Crosby, U.S.N.,  
Chief of Staff  
Naval War College,  
Newport, Rhode Island.

0476

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO. CALIFORNIA

3 August 1943

Gentlemen:

Please change my address from Naval War College,  
Newport, Rhode Island, to U.S.S. Minneapolis, c/o Fleet  
Post Office, San Francisco, California.

Very truly yours,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

The United States News,  
Executive Offices,  
2201 M Street N.W.,  
Washington 7, D.C.

0477



U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

4 August 1943

Dear Admiral:

It was very nice to see you the other day and I appreciated thoroughly your friendly reception, not only of myself but my executive, Commander Hogle.

It was a great pleasure to go over the radar technical school with the heads of it and I can assure you that both of us were quite impressed with what we saw and heard. It strikes me that your personnel are thoroughly competent.

I am sending herewith as an enclosure the hymn of which I spoke and which, as you can see from this program, is being sung in New York.

Verse 1 is the original verse. Verses 2 and 3 are original with me and verse 4 is the original verse 4 modified to suit the new conception.

Very frankly, I am happy to say that this hymn as herewith presented has been used in a lot of places, not the least of which is the Senate of the United States where it was used as a prayer by the Senate Chaplain. I only discovered this fact because the paper picked it up and commented on it.

Naturally I would feel very gratified if you would care to use this in your program and as a matter of fact your chaplain indicated to me that he wanted to use it as a theme song for your radio hour. I have no feelings about how it shall be used excepting that I hope it will be used. We are consistently striving to increase the unity of our people and how can it be better done than by a hymn of this nature which stresses land, sea and air as one unit? I am frank to admit that had it not been for the kind understanding and guidance of Dr. Lauriston Scaife of ~~the~~ Trinity Church this hymn might not have been written.

*Newport, R. I.*

With best wishes to you and Mrs. Osterhaus, whom I hope to see again one of these days, I am as ever,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

Rear Admiral Hugo W. Osterhaus, USN,  
Treasure Island,  
San Francisco, California.

0478

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO. CALIFORNIA

7 August 1943.

Dear Guns:

The situation to which I referred when I left Newport concerning the fire effect diagrams of this ship seems to obtain now. The diagrams which you stated existed on board ships of similar design seem to be entirely lacking.

I am quite anxious to draw up these diagrams so that I may have them available in my C.I.C. The projected use of them is quite simple. It is my hope that upon picking up a ship we will be able to identify her, at least in daylight, and then my C.I.C. Evaluator can inform me from a look at these diagrams as to the most suitable range at which to engage. This will soon facilitate bridge operations and combat operations.

Will you send me all the information on this subject that Dees had there, and anything else which you may consider important, so that I may draw these diagrams immediately. A copy of one which you might make for this ship as a guide would be appreciated.

Things are going along reasonably well. I suppose that Commander Chanler has told you where we are and I can tell you I will be damn glad when we are no longer here. To be doing what we are doing is important, naturally, but it embraces in itself very little training or preparation for war and I don't like that.

I know that you are thoroughly enjoying your duty at the college. You can't fail to do so even though you would probably like to go to sea again. You will get there soon enough as you will soon find out, but now you are entitled to a rest after your arduous efforts, and you should take it and enjoy it. I hope you will see fit to give my best wishes to everyone on the staff and to those of our friends whom we mutually knew in town, such as our charming Princess Louise. Best of luck and if there is anything I can do for you from here, a word from you will start the ball rolling.

I have written a letter to Captain Crosby asking him for certain papers and perhaps you should refer this to him also.

I am sending this letter via air mail in order to obtain a prompt reply from you as our time here is getting less and less. Best regards.

Yours sincerely,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

Comdr. J.M. Worthington, USN,  
U.S. Naval War College,  
Newport, Rhode Island.

0479

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

7 August 1943.

Dear Ross:

This is merely a note to express to you my personal appreciation of your thoughtfulness when you assigned me this command. It is just exactly what I had wanted and I desired it above a new battleship because I feel there is considerably more chance for action in the cruisers than in the battleships.

I am writing this to you because it is my understanding our old friend Bill has gone somewhere and that you have relieved him. I hope that he got what he wanted. Very frankly, Bill's choice and mine, if I have heard correctly, ~~are~~ distinctly different. There is a story around that Bill was seeking command of the New Jersey, which probably is a desirable job, but I personally would not want such a command at this time as the chance of its getting into action for quite a long time seems remote. These new ships are too expensive, too new and too hard to replace to endanger now with green crews and inexperience everywhere.

I want to congratulate you on your assignment to be director - the Twelfth Naval District told me that you had been so assigned - and I know you are going to do a swell job in an important and difficult assignment.

Best regards to you, to Admiral Denfeld and to the Chief of the Bureau.

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

Captain T. R. Cooley, U.S.N.,  
Director, Officer Detail,  
Office of Naval Personnel,  
Arlington, Virginia.

0480

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

16 August 1943.

Dear Mr. Urquart:

The bearers of this letter, Daniel Maramba, Chief Cook, and Eligio Madrazo, Chief Steward, are the two members of this ship's company whom you authorized to take a two or three days course under your Chef, beginning now.

I should appreciate it very much if you would have your Chef show them your approved method of cooking simple things such as broccoli. I should also appreciate some instructions in Fairmont sauces and seasonings.

Anything else you feel you can give them in the few days they are with you will be more than appreciated by the undersigned.

I should appreciate your courtesy if you will keep the name of the ship to which these men are assigned confidential.

Very truly yours,

Richard W. Bates,  
Captain, U.S. Navy,  
Commanding.

Mr. Urquart,  
Assistant Manager,  
Fairmont Hotel,  
San Francisco, Calif.

0481

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Monday,  
16 August 1943

Gentlemen:

I cannot begin to tell you how much I regretted leaving the sacred confines of your charming club. Nothing but war could have moved me to depart and were it not for my happiness in having an opportunity to serve my nation in a more active theater I should have liked nothing better than to have remained.

The Reading Room is a definite institution, and yet at the same time it has personality. It is that personality which makes the club so attractive and which I enjoyed so much. Being a bachelor and often having no particular place to go, I would turn towards the Reading Room which at once became an oasis, not only because of the Reilly-Doyle Bar but also because of the charm of the members there. Where on earth could one find such congenial, convivial souls gathered daily round the pool (table) as you M. le President, and Gus, and Bill, and George, and Beverly, and Edgar, and Doctor W., the ration czar, and Walter, the Chief Justice, and Perry, the great historian, - to say nothing of some of the service guests such as Hugh and Captain Duane and Dr. Dodderer. The answer of course is - "nowhere" - and it is here in "nowhere" that we will let our thoughts rest.

Anyway, this letter is merely my way to say "goodbye" for the present to a fine club and to that fine body of men who comprise its membership, and whose courtesy made it possible for me and for many, many other members of the Armed Services to discover the many charms hidden by that relatively unimpressive exterior.

To all of you whom I have named and with whom I "pooled" so much, and to those many others whom I have not named but whose kindnesses I shall ever bear witness to, I say "Aloha pau ole", which in Hawaiian really means "goodbye with an abiding affection".

Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

The President,  
The Board of Governors,  
Reading Room,  
Newport, R.I.

0482

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Monday,  
16 August 1943

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Very sincerely yours,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U.S. Navy.

The President,  
The Board of Governors,  
Reading Room,  
Newport, R.I.

0483

March 95-  
Xf

0484

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

19 August 1943.

Gentlemen:

Under receipt number 47-40-31 of November of last year, I turned over four tires to the government. I was to receive payment for these tires from the government.

In view of the fact that I have not received any word of any kind from the government, I am requesting now that you advise me as to what happened to these tires. My receipt indicated as follows:

To Destination Office - Providence, Rhode Island.

Consignee - Defense Supplies Corporation.

Street Address - 50 Aleppo Street,  
854-L Newport, Rhode Island.

Receipt signed by - R. McDonald.

Sincerely,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

Railway Express Agency,  
50 Aleppo Street,  
Newport, Rhode Island.

0485



U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

24 August 1943

W. B. Hibbs & Company,  
725 15th Street,  
Washington, D.C.

Gentlemen:

Please close out my account of \$80.73 as per this date.  
I have been transferred from the Naval War College and my  
new address is U.S.S. MINNEAPOLIS,  
c/o Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California.

Very truly yours,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

Mailed 26 Aug 43 - LJA

0486

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO. CALIFORNIA

26 August 1943.

Dear "Captain":

Your short letter to me was as usual one of your splendid masterpieces and you, in a few words, intended to gain a victory over me without having to fight for it. Alas for you. Words are not enough any more. I expect the same competition from you that I got from the Winslow, and I have one modification today over my view point then. It is this. When you had the Winslow and I had the Clark it was for competition sake only and I wanted to be better than you were and fortunately succeeded. Today it is not competition sake at all but it is competition to insure that all of us are equal when we meet the enemy. I don't want you to be any better than I am then, but I want neither of us to be below perfect.

You are evidently still hanging around the place where you were before, just as we are, and so I hope that I shall have the good fortune of seeing you before long. Best regards to a great guy.

As ever, your old pal,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

Captain Randall Dees,  
U.S.S. PENSACOLA,  
c/o Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, Calif.

*Mailed 27 Aug 43 - DB*

0487

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

26 August 1943.

Dear Guns:

I have received the curves which I requested from you and needless to say I am gratified. I am so busy here that I have had very little time to give to this subject and your papers and curves have come in most opportunely. It was very nice of you.

We are still the way we were before but the time is not too far distant when we will be somewhere else, and where that may be you or Chanler can make a pretty good guess.

I can't say too strongly how much I miss the old gang around the college and the swell exchange of views all of us had with one another. The college is a great place and I really have a most affectionate regard for it.

Many, many thanks for what you have done and warmest regards to everyone, including the Waves.

As ever, your old friend,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U.S. Navy.

Commander J.N. Worthington,  
Naval War College,  
Newport, Rhode Island.

*Mailed 27 Aug 43 - LB*

0488

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

27 August 1943.

Dear Admiral:

I have been out here about a month now and have had command all the time I have been here. I find the Minnie to be a fine ship and one you will scarcely recognize when you see what the Navy Yard has done to her. Naturally what is being done was worked out, I guess, by the board of which you are a member and therefore you are probably more familiar with the set up than I am. Any way she is a beautiful ship and I am very pleased with her. I do hope that you will come out here one of these days, or at least out to the fleet, so that we can show off for you. Having been trained in the destroyers during the time when you were the Admiral, I have a pretty darn good idea of what a smart ship should be like and it is my intention that there shall be no ship in any Navy anywhere near our size which will equal us in all qualities so essential to success in military combat. There is so much that one learns in the study of war at the War College concerning command in war that I hope that my training under you at the War College and more recently, under Admiral Pye, will bear immense fruit. The very first thing I discovered on here, for example, was that we had no fire effect diagrams of any kind, and upon interrogating the Gunnery Officer as to how he planned to meet the enemy in combat he stated that he would endeavor to get a range between fifteen and eighteen thousand yards, and intimated that this was doctrine. I immediately informed him that this was not doctrine now as there were range bands in which some vessels had advantages over other vessels, and so on. I then wrote to the War College and asked for the information on this line, which they very kindly sent to me and which I am now about to show to our Gunnery Officer and our C.I.C. Evaluator so that we may profit by our own advantage rather than to suffer under the enemy's advantage. Many, many other ideas are coming up every moment and I feel that all of them will be ironed out to our great advantage.

I hear that you are about to spend several weeks with Mrs. Vanderbilt in Newport, followed by a week or more with Doctor Rice. I certainly think that is swell. I feel that I know Doctor Rice quite well and I have always been impressed with his remarkable experiences in the Amazons and his discussions of "curare", which as you will recall, if I have spelled it correctly, is the poison used by the natives for their blow guns and for their arrows. I hope that you will remember me very kindly to him. Mrs. Vanderbilt is also remarkable in her own rights. She is a very extraordinary woman to me and I used to enjoy sitting with her and discussing not only matters of today but also those of yesteryear, and how best to handle certain national policies. I recollect that Mrs. Vanderbilt once stated that she thought that the way to stop war was to have the women lock the doors on their husbands. I told her that I could not concur with her at all because history had repeatedly shown that whenever people like to do something it is hard to stop them, even though what they want to do is made definitely unlawful. It was for this reason that prohibition failed. I told her further

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

that I thought that we would have bootlegging in love which the wives would not approve of and which would break them down, also that certain wives would not be true to the others and would not maintain their high ideals. At the time of this discussion there were a large number of people around us at the Clam Bake Club and they seemed to enjoy the whole affair.

When I last saw Mrs. Vanderbilt she asked me to look her up in New York, which was very gracious of her, but I could not do it.

Along this line I noticed today that Lord Montbatten had been made supreme Allied Chief for the South East Asia. Lord Montbatten happens to be a great friend of Mrs. Vanderbilt and it was on her yacht that he met his present wife. Every time I see Lord Montbatten's name in the paper I can't help laughing at my surprise in seeing him in his full uniform as a Captain in the Royal Navy and wearing the aiguillettes of Aide-de-camp to the King, riding around beside the chauffeur of the Vanderbilt Rolls Royce which was so antique in style that both the driver and Lord Montbatten stuck high in the air, and were very noticeable. I asked whence they had come and was informed that they both had been lunch guests of the President of the Naval War College, Admiral E.C. Kalbfus.

There is nothing new at the present moment to report to you but when I find something of interest I will do so. I have one request and that is that you will thank the general board for the beautiful manner in which they so heavily rearmed this ship that now everyone seems quite satisfied, although there is some discussion about the hangar.

I haven't heard any new jokes around here because I have been a little too busy to hear them and also because it strikes me that whenever there are any new jokes to tell, I am usually the one to tell them. They do say this however, "Would you rather cheat in a jeep with a creep, or behave in a cave with a Wave?" Evidently this word "creep" is a west coast expression in San Francisco for those strange distorted people known as "queers". I heard someone tell the above to some Waves the other day and they thought it was very funny. They said they had heard about everything but this was a new one and actually amusing.

May I once again thank you for everything you have done for me in the past, not the least of which was to give me the privilege of serving on the War College Staff with you. It is always a great pleasure for a younger man to associate with men of attainment and I don't know anyone who has accomplished more in a lifetime of naval effort than you. It is my belief that the lessons developed in the War College, and which are now being more and more studied in the fleet, will bear fruit in victory for our arms in the shortest time at the minimum cost.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO. CALIFORNIA

With warmest regards to you and to Mrs. Kalbfus, and with hopes that you will remember me most kindly to your many friends when you go to Newport.

I am as ever,

Yours sincerely,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

Admiral Edward C. Kalbfus, USN,  
General Board,  
Washington, D. C.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

3 September 1943

Dear Admiral:

I have received the papers which you sent me as per my request and I can assure you that I am indeed grateful to you for your courtesy. Some of them have already been in use.

Rear Admiral Wilder Baker arrived here day before yesterday and I had lunch with him yesterday. We had quite a discussion over the War College with respect to two items which I think you should know about. The first item arose over his Flag Secretary, Lieutenant Pilcher, who graduated from the Preparatory Staff Class of the Naval War College in June of this year. Admiral Baker stated that he thought Lieutenant Pilcher was a fine officer and had learned a great deal at the War College, but unfortunately was not a qualified watch stander. He stated that he thought that the War College should insist that only officers be sent there who were qualified in all respects to serve in any capacity. I told him that the War College could not choose these days - that it had indicated its wishes more than once to the Chief of Naval Personnel but had been told that officers of specific training were not available as a general thing. Admiral Baker then stated that he thought that this was a very narrow view on the part of Naval Personnel and stated further that it was his belief that Naval Personnel would give in if the War College put pressure on it. In reply, I told him that the time was not far distant, I thought, when the President of the War College would be able to choose, as it was quite evident that the War College was gaining in prestige and a diploma would soon be almost a requisite for a command, but today such was not the case.

The other point that Admiral Baker brought up concerned the battle of Kormandorski. As you will recollect, the Richmond was one of the two cruisers in that action and therefore there was considerable interest evident on the Richmond as to what the War College had to say. Judging from the attitude of Admiral Baker, who relieved Admiral McMorris, there seems to be no doubt but that the War College criticisms are viewed not only with interest but also with trepidation. I think that this is a helpful condition because it will force officers to study war more fully than has been the practice in the past. Admiral Baker said that there were two or three things in this report that were not correct and he thought that it was bad for the War College to be in error. He referred particularly to the range which the War College report gave as 22,000 yards, and which figure he says is in error. The maximum range of the twin mounts is 22,000 yards, but that of the single guns is only about 18,000 yards. For this reason the Richmond considers its maximum range for any effective purpose is 17,000 yards.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

CONFIDENTIAL

3 September 1943

The Admiral also commented upon the fact that the War College report stated that Admiral McMorris had mentally gone through the recognized War College mental procedure of obtaining information, determining strength and weakness factors, choosing own courses of action, estimating enemy capabilities, and finally arriving at a decision. Admiral Baker said that this was not so - that Admiral McMorris had talked over the situation as it unfolded with his senior aide, Lt. Comdr. Peyton Harrison, U.S.N.R., and had then acted without the above mental procedure. I replied that Admiral McMorris was a graduate of the Naval War College and it was the War College's opinion therefore, and is mine now, that he had gone through those mental steps even though there is no record of his having done so. I said further that it was the hope of the War College that it would be able to teach Commanders to think in just that fashion. Page 217, Sound Military Decision, covers this point quite definitely.

Outside of the above two comments, Admiral Baker thought the War College was accomplishing a very fine thing and stated that he thought that the War College's discussion published in certain COMINCH battle reports, as well as in direct correspondence, were exceptionally fine. He did think that the War College discussions were somewhat wrong on occasions in that the criticisms were somewhat strong. To this I replied that the college had not desired to be so strong as it did not have all of the facts, but that it had been directed by COMINCH to spare no punches.

Things are going along rather smoothly out here. We are still at Mare Island but are due to depart almost any day, depending upon circumstances. I am getting mighty impatient about it but the item that is delaying us can not be rushed, unfortunately.

You would be highly interested in our Combat Information Center, I feel sure.

Once again may I express to you my deep satisfaction of having had the privilege of serving on the staff with you. It was a most delightful and stimulating experience and were we not in a war I could ask for no better privilege again.

With my best regards to everyone.

Very sincerely,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U.S. Navy.

Rear Admiral William S. Pye, USN,  
President, Naval War College,  
Newport, Rhode Island.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

7 September 1943.

Dear Captain Lutens:

Sometime ago, in April in fact, you and I communicated over the appointment of my brother, now First Lieutenant Leslie R. Bates of the Army of the United States, as to his appointment as a ground school instructor. My brother, as you perhaps remember, is now in the Army and is serving in Arizona somewhere at an important training command.

I am now in command of this ship and will have little opportunity to write to you about him in the future. So before this situation develops, I thought it would be smart for me to write to you now about a matter which we discussed over the telephone and which you may have already acted on. If you have, I hope you will forgive me and will forget this letter, but if you have not, I hope that you will be grateful to me for bringing it up. The matter is this.

My brother was in the Army in the last war and served in the air arm, finally reaching the rank of First Lieutenant. He was a pilot of a pursuit squadron I think. After the war he continued in the Army Reserve and reached the rank of Captain. So his appointment as a First Lieutenant in this war, while appreciated by him, was somewhat disappointing because he felt that he was entitled to the rank of Captain.

I told all of this to you at the time over the phone and you told me then to think nothing of it as it was your plan to promote the older officers to Captain almost immediately. I can well understand why the older officers would be so promoted, particularly in the educational work in which my own brother is associated, as there is the matter of prestige among college professors which must be maintained.

I do hope that you have already seen fit to promote my brother to Captain and, if you have not, I hope that you will do so provided it is legal and suitable to do so.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

I want to thank you very much for your cooperation and interest in this affair and to assure you that if all associations between the Army and the Navy are as simple as my associations with you have been, we need have no fear of the future. Certainly my association on the Naval War College Staff and on the U.S. Staff College staff with Army officers, both ground and air, was on an exceptional high plane of high cooperation, courtesy, respect, and understanding.

With best regards, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

Richard W. Bates,  
Captain, U.S. Navy.

Captain Ralph W. Luten, Air Corps,  
Act. Chief, Appointment Section,  
Officers' Br. Mil. Pers. Div.  
Office of Asst. Chief of Air Staff,  
Personnel,  
War Department,  
Washington, D. C.

0495

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

10 September 1943.

Dear Paul:

As you can see from the heading, I am in command of this fine ship and couldn't be more pleased. I hope that you are equally satisfied in the work that you are doing.

What I am writing to you about primarily is the fact that I sent you sometime ago, 12 white uniform shirts which I know you received because you gratefully acknowledged. The cost of these shirts were \$21 and your beloved Helen offered to pay it at the time but I refused to permit her handling our deals. I am not asking for the \$21 now. All I am doing is to indicate what the cost was as I imagine you have been wondering.

I ran into your daughter Rose Marie the other day in San Francisco, and she was looking swell and was visiting Admiral Greenslade. She asked me to come over to visit them, or at least to say hello but I was unable to do it.

I left Newport on 5 July and the Naval War College was in full swing at that time.

The situation in Europe seems to be going very well for us and I am gratified naturally. I presume that eagle eye of yours had a lot to do with it. I hate to sign off so quick but time is pressing.

Best regards to you as always,

Very sincerely yours,

Richard W. Bates,  
Captain, U.S. Navy.

Captain Paul Bastedo, USN  
Naval Attache, U.S. Embassy,  
London, England.

0496

## U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS

C/O FLEET POST OFFICE

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

26 September 1943.

Dear Legs:

I am in receipt of your letter of 19 September 1943, which was delivered to me today by some Commander, name unfortunately forgot! It was nice of you to write.

Thank you very much for your handling of our station wagon, it has arrived safely in Honolulu and I am already using it. It was typical of you to be so thoughtful and so prompt about it and I am appreciative.

In regard to the MINNEAPOLIS, I will tell you how things went upon leaving the yard.

(a) ENGINEERING: The whole engineering plant functioned very well indeed and no difficulty of any consequence developed with the single exception of the joint in the main steam line which, after two hours of full power, leaked even more than it did after our first full power run. For this reason we were given ten days availability at Pearl Harbor Navy Yard, but I managed to prevail upon the Yard, through a visit with the Commandant and others, to get the job done in five days. I have run full power since and the line is now tight.

Yesterday we had a very near serious casualty caused by the failure of the light and power generators. We were standing in to Pearl Harbor and had reached the channel near the new dry dock, called dry dock #4, when all electrical power failed, and we headed for the new dry dock caisson. I tried to steer the ship by the engines but got no results because the annunciators were dead. Likewise the gyros were dead. All that I had to communicate with were the telephones. Our rudder had jammed full right and could not be freed so, over the telephone, I gave the order to back emergency full. To the everlasting credit of the Engineering Department, they gave us all they had including their vacuum. This, plus the anchor, saved us from crashing into the beach or the dry dock. I finally succeeded in getting two pilots and a couple of tugs and we managed to get back into the channel without damage to anything except our pride. The Engineering Officer thinks that the generators failed because a slug of water stopped one of them and slowed down another with the result that the third generator started driving the second generator as a motor with the result that all of them stopped. The amount of water that came in must have been negligible, as evidence seems to indicate that the only place it could have come from was an auxiliary steam line in which the drain is a little higher than it should be. This line was cut in at the time of the casualty and it is believed that the water got into the turbines from this. If the generators had been operating satisfactory, such a shot of water, if it was a shot of water, should not have been sufficient to have caused the turbo generators to fail.

If you have a sister ship of ours there as you said, I think it would be wise to check up on her generators to insure that they are operating correctly.

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0497

## U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS

C/O FLEET POST OFFICE

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

(b) HULL: Nothing serious has developed in this department with the possible exception of a six inch crack which has shown up on one of the blades of #2 propeller, and a crack twelve inches in length in the stern tube in #1 shaft where the shaft enters the hull. This crack is  $3/8$ " to  $1/2$ " wide, appears to extend down to the shaft, and is at least twelve inches in length. It was located by divers, and they think that it may be an old welded seam which is opening.

We have had considerable difficulty with our gasoline stowage equipment because each time the tanks overflow through the vent system, the vent lines from the inert gas system fill. This gasoline then seeps through inert gas system relief stems in the inert gas machine room and lower gasoline trunk creating a serious fire hazard. Valves on gasoline filling line purging system are located in an adjoining, but inaccessible compartment causing operational difficulties. Safe operation of the gasoline system with present installation is impossible.

I am putting in a repair request to the yard to see if we can't make some changes in this and I am enclosing a copy of the repair request so that you can read it over for other ships.

Our camouflage has been highly appreciated here and has been very successful. When we arrived off Pearl Harbor, the Yard sent us a signal that they were sending a pilot to take us to a new dock that was not on our charts and for us to wait for him outside. This we did, but the pilot failed to pick us up so we stood on in. We finally picked up the pilot and he said that he had been told to pick up a cruiser but all he could see was a destroyer that was circling around, and he further said that had we not stood in he would probably still be there. I would suggest that you congratulate the paint shop and particularly Mr. Posey and Mr. Maloof for their fine work. It has been touched up considerably by Pearl Harbor and I think that the paint shop here now considers it their baby and their design. We arrived in port last night and the Quartermaster painter was down this morning to see what he could do to touch up the camouflage.

The creep eliminator installed on the Waterbury crane has been very successful and I consider it a distinct improvement. Your Mr. Jones in the Hull Design Section would be interested to hear this, I think, as it is his idea and I suggest that you tell him about it.

(c) GUNNERY: The above successes in other departments do not quite pertain to the Gunnery Department. Here, we encountered serious difficulties with the hydraulic system. It still leaks and the Yard is now endeavoring to patch it up some way. The motor in the elevator system of turret number one loses pressure output and, as a result, the elevator motor fails to turn up the required number of turns. An inspection of the SMP shows it had become oil soaked by oil leaking through the commutator end of the pump. This motor is now in such shape that we have lost remote control in elevation in turret number one. Pearl Harbor is working on the motor today but it may not be back for some days.

We endeavored to fire the main battery in automatic and found that it worked well in elevation but not in train. Each turret seemed to fire at a

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## U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

different point in azimuth with the result that we had dispersion in azimuth rather than in range. It is not believed that this will be difficult to repair. It is my suggestion, however, that in the future, vessels be called upon to fire all turrets before leaving the yard to insure that the adjustments are properly made.

Our five inch battery has done very well, but during the past several days firing, the same defect appeared in six out of eight 5" guns. This was due to the adjustment of the retainer collars around the center column of the mounts. This brought about a very serious condition in the A.A. battery as much as 75% of our battery could have been out of commission in the middle of an air attack. Pearl Harbor is now correcting this condition by shimming up some mounts and taking the shimmy out of others. All the experts of the yard, including Gun Factory representatives are here this very instant working on these guns and it is hoped that they will achieve excellent results.

It was very nice to have seen you at Mare Island and I know that you are not only capable of a good job, but in fact doing one. I personally feel that had you not been there we would have had a hell of a time getting out and might have been in the same position the PENSACOLA is in now. Commander Tannsky also worked hard and loyally and I am appreciative of his work also. I suppose as yards go, Mare Island is as good as any although there is an awful lot of idleness on the job and incompetence there. I have not, as yet, noticed that condition at this yard and I mentioned the fact to Roger Paine. He said that judging Yards on that line would not be justified as everyone out here had been frightened to death by the Japs. I like Mare Island Navy Yard and I likewise appreciate the friendly way in which you and the Yard Manager went eye to eye with me in my efforts to improve my ship. I think Crisp is a very capable Yard Manager and Roger thinks likewise. I have no criticism along this line except that some of the people there are evidently not loyal to him and are not completely informing him of what is going on. In a job of the nature of his, the boss must have the facts and it is best that he get them through his leading subordinates. I know that you always endeavor to keep him informed, but I also knew that you were not always informed either.

Thank you very much for all your kind remarks concerning my cooperation and understanding. Heaven only knows that I could do nothing else, because I felt that the leading lights of Mare Island desired to win this war just as much as I did. Therefore, it was quite evident that the best method of getting the MINNEAPOLIS out of the Yard was through the very things which you mentioned, i.e., cooperation, understanding, and, if I may add another, through the intelligent appraisal of what we were endeavoring to accomplish.

I like you and your family very much as you well know, and I hope that we shall be thrown together again soon. As for yourself, best of luck in whatever you may do and thanks very much for expediting my departure as I think that I will soon be witnessing enemy splashes. I sincerely trust that they will not be too close aboard.

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Best Regards as ever,

Your old friend,

R. W. BATES,  
Captain, U. S. Navy.

Captain W.D. Leggett, Jr., USN  
Navy Yard,  
Marine Island, California.

0500

U.S.S. MINNEAPOLIS  
c/o Fleet Post Office  
San Francisco, California

A16-3

(10-hn)

Ser: 00148

~~SECRET~~13 October 1943  
**UNCLASSIFIED**

From: Commanding Officer.  
To : Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.  
Via : (1) Commander Task Group 14.2.  
(2) Commander Task Group 14.  
Subject: The Assault on Wake Island and its relation to future operations against atolls.  
Reference: (a) U.S.S. MINNEAPOLIS Secret ltr. A16-3/(00146) dated 8 October 1943.

1. Since forwarding reference (a) the Commanding Officer has reached the conclusion that certain lessons, additional to those already submitted, are of such importance as regards future operations as to merit their submission. These lessons concern the effect of air bombing against prepared Japanese positions in atolls—the effect of gun firing against the same positions—and an impartial evaluation from the experience of Wake as to which is preferable under these conditions and to what extent.

2. The discussion thereon follows:

(a) It will be remembered that air power delivered attacks over a period of six hours prior to the surface bombardment. It will also be remembered that the bombs dropped in these attacks were not dropped in "area" bombing but were instead dropped in "precision" bombing against definite targets, among which it is understood the gun emplacements enjoyed high priority. What was the result of this precision bombing as viewed by the Southern Bombardment Group? The answer must definitely be in the negative, for as has been indicated previously in reference (a), and as has been indicated on the MINNEAPOLIS track chart, numerous batteries on the south shores of both Wake Island and Wilkes Island opened fire on the cruisers. The fortunate circumstance for the cruisers was that the cruiser tracks were generally beyond the effective range of the major portion of the Japanese guns which were generally of small caliber, and, therefore, they were not too endangered, although about one hundred shells landed in the cruiser area, some as near as fifty yards to the cruisers.

(b) Whether the batteries which opened fire were all of the batteries originally installed on Wake Island by the Japanese or whether they were merely part of them, the others having been knocked out by air power, is not known, but in view of the number not knocked out by air bombing, the number actually knocked out by air power could not have been very high. As a matter of interest, many of the smaller

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NAV OPNAVINST 55513 SERIES, SUBJ: SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF 20-YEAR-OLD DOCUMENTS

0501



~~SECRET~~

Subject: The Assault on Wake Island and its relation to future operations against atolls. UNCLASSIFIED

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guns seemed to have been manned by crews operating in the open without any protection and, among these, were a considerable number of anti-aircraft guns. During the gun bombardment the counter-battery fire of the cruiser and destroyer 5" guns was reportedly quite effective in driving the crews of these guns to cover and they were seen leaving their guns and running for that cover.

(c) Owing to the accuracy and number of the Japanese batteries which survived the air bombing it became necessary to do more counter-battery with the main battery of the MINNEAPOLIS than had been contemplated. It appeared as if the other cruisers of Cruiser Division Six had arrived at the same conclusion. Most of this happened on the first leg of the bombardment.

(d) When the second leg of the bombardment was reached it was noted that the fire of the Japanese batteries was so seriously reduced in both volume and accuracy as to be negligible. Whether this was a result of the third strike of precision bombers from the LEXINGTON and the COMPENS, or whether it was from the counter-battery fire of the cruisers, is not known. In evaluating this unknown result it must be remembered that earlier heavy precision air bombing left a considerable number of Japanese batteries with effective fire; and that the first leg of bombardment, plus the concurrent third air bombing strike, resulted in a very marked reduction in the Japanese gunfire.

As a further part of the evaluation, three enemy capabilities in this connection must be considered:

- (1) That the enemy guns were in fact silenced by being knocked out by air or ship bombardment, or by both.
- (2) That the enemy guns were not so silenced but were silenced by direction from the Japanese Commander to prevent further destruction and to give the impression of having been destroyed.
- (3) That the enemy guns were not so silenced but were silenced by the local crews who decided that owing to the ineffectiveness of their fire they were merely drawing fire on themselves.

(e) Whatever may have been the reason for it, it remains that the enemy guns ceased firing. For an operation of this type this result may have been all that was expected by the Commander in Chief. But what if a landing operation had been contemplated? It would appear, in this case, as if the air bombardment would not have proved sufficient for counter-battery. It would further appear as if the fire from the ships likewise would not have proved sufficient, but, from results observed, gunfire seemed much more effective than air bombing.

It would appear, therefore, as if the major counter-battery work on atolls of this kind must be the direct function of

0502

~~SECRET~~

Subject: The assault on Wake Island and its relation to future operations against atolls.

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the ship bombardment groups, assisted by the air groups. Even in this case it would appear as if it was not impossible that the Japanese have succeeded in building some sort of bomb shelter and have succeeded in so camouflaging it as to insure its safety within reasonable limits against both air and ship bombardment, excepting in the case of a direct hit.

(f) The major lesson then, derived from this action insofar as future amphibious operations is concerned against atolls of this type, is this:

"Both air power and ship-based gun power in great quantity will be required to insure that the enemy batteries have been silenced, that counter-battery will be more a function of gun power than of air power, and that even then it may be expected that the landing will be opposed in strength and that considerable losses will fall to the attackers. Such losses will have to be accepted."

(g) The minor lesson learned, and this lesson is also of high importance, is:

"That there is a definite place in shore bombardment, and especially in landing operations, for both air power and ship-based gun power—that both of these are complementary to each other—and that no landing should be attempted until both have, so far as is humanly possible to visualize, succeeded in accomplishing their assigned tasks."

(h) Where "surprise" is obtained there is an apparent exception to the requirements of sufficient air and gun power, but it is difficult to count in advance on obtaining surprise. Therefore, plans must be prepared on the assumption that surprise will not be a decisive factor.

3. An additional lesson concerning the function of air power in an operation of this kind is to secure command of the air—that is local command for the period of the basic operation. Without this "command of the air" the ability of cruisers to make an effective daylight bombardment would be very doubtful indeed. It can be readily accepted that one reason for the success of the cruiser bombardment at Wake was the fact that air power had obtained this command.

R. W. BATES.

UNCLASSIFIED

0503

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

23 October 1943.

Dear Ike:

I can not begin to tell you with what sincere regret I heard, the other day, that you had been detached and were probably being ordered to some job in Washington. I say "sincere regret" advisably because of two items. The first, because of the fact that you are reportedly not too well; the other because of the fact that I had hoped to serve under your flag.

With reference to the question of your personal health, I want you to know that the rumor here is that some how you hurt the vertebrae of your backbone and now required some hospitalization or at least some sort of rest. I hope that this rumor is not true. I hope that you are the same fighting man and in the same good physical health that you always were. However, if your vertebrae is in fact damaged, I hope that you won't take too many measures which may retard your improvement. I say this to you because, as you have known these many years, I have always had a very deep affection for you as well as admiration for your naval talents and practical leadership. This war is not over, nor does it show any signs of being over, so that there is plenty of time for you to recover and to have a rest before going to sea again. Take it easy!

With regard to the second item - the fact that I had hoped to serve under your flag directly, rather than indirectly - I want you to know that I am quite sincere in this. I have watched your career in the Atlantic and then again in the Pacific and I have felt that I could learn more in a short time from you than from anyone else. Moreover, I feel that I know you very well indeed, and having been with you at the War College I feel that your language and mine would have been very understandable.

It seems that such was not to have been my good fortune. However, I did have the good fortune to get into action and you have probably already received reports on that from my Admiral during that operation. Naturally, I can not discuss, in this letter, what went on but I presume that by now you are familiar with the situation. I think that you would have been proud of your ships as they really did a very good job, and this is particularly so when you consider my command, for an example, had just come out of the Navy Yard after nine months overhaul. I had to work awfully hard to get her out of the Navy Yard and I used all the persuasion and knowledge that I had to accomplish this. I sincerely believe that I would have been no better off than the Pensacola is now had I not been familiar with Navy Yards and particularly the Mare Island Navy Yard, and if I had not gone to see the Commandant of the Yard to insure that the work done on my ship was not only well and thoroughly done, but also that nothing would delay my departure. The Commandant of the Yard told me that he thoroughly concurred with me and that he would see to it that my desires were met. Someday I should like

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U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

the chance to tell you exactly the situation there when I arrived and took command, and what I had to do in order to clear up what had been done prior to then. Upon finally leaving the yard, I got a letter from the Production Manager, Captain Leggett, worded in part as follows:

"We appreciate your co-operation and understanding in a situation which we know didn't look too good, and which might have developed unpleasantly".

I was determined to get into battle as soon as I could. As you perhaps know, I did not desire any command other than a cruiser because I was afraid that almost any other command would not get into action right away. So, as I said in the beginning, having obtained the command I desired, I was determined to bring the ship into action as rapidly as possible. I therefore requested training in this area and upon arrival here was promptly invited by the number one boss to lunch, and he told me that he was very glad that I had come out here and that he was most anxious that I take part in the next action. I said that I wanted to very much, that I had trained my men on the guns in the Navy Yard and at the training centers, and that I would be ready if he could give me a few days training as we had not fired a shot from the ship for nine months. He said that he would arrange it and sure enough I got four days training and then I went on an operation in which I engaged the enemy. I can not begin to tell you the satisfaction that I felt, nor can I begin to tell you with what anticipation I view more action along this line. I am most impatient to get into battle again, and if the rumor in the paper is correct, it won't be long now. My only regret is that you will not be taking us into action. Lady Luck has not forgotten us entirely, however, because we are to have another outstanding leader with his flag on this ship, and I look forward to my association with him with deep interest.

I will try to keep you advised as to how your old boys are doing as best I can. It is most difficult to talk about confidential matters, as you know, so you will have to read between the lines.

I hope that you enjoy your new duty wherever it may be and I hope that if it happens to be around Washington you will remember me most kindly to everyone that I may know. Take care of yourself!

As ever,

Yours most sincerely,

Richard W. Bates,  
Captain, U.S. Navy.

Rear Admiral Robert C. Giffin, USN,  
U.S.S. WICHITA,  
c/o Fleet Post Office,  
San Francisco, California.

0505

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

ADVICE  
by  
RAFE

Now Mariad, your tale of woe,  
Has only hit me so and so,  
For don't you know, alas, alack,  
There's little money in the track?  
And don't you know, for this is true,  
That most men want what they can of you?  
That where there's dough in ready cash  
A scheming man can make a "mash".  
I tried to tell you this before,  
I referred to Young McGhee,  
But you wouldn't listen to a friend,  
You itched above the knee.  
Then one day you had enough  
Of living in the Army rough,  
You sent me message, "Hurrah, I'm free,  
I'm no more married to friend McGhee."  
With that your Ted and your old Rafe  
Went jumping round and round the place,  
Said Ted to Rafe, "I think it swell,  
That Mariad has quit her hell."  
But Rafe lay low for a little while  
To see if this was truth or guile,  
Alas, again you had your say,  
You married a Chicago guy named Hay.  
You hadn't yet learned in taking "courses",  
It couldn't be done with "hobby horses".  
Now, now, you say you've quit your "Hay",  
Pray, what am I to think?  
Have you really quit your Manville plan,  
Have you really stopped your drink?

R. W. BATES.

0506

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

24 October 1943

Dear Legs:

Since I last wrote to you we have had more opportunity to test our ship and everything has worked very well indeed excepting three items. These are:

(a) Item One: The 5" guns. If you recollect in my last letter of 26 September, I referred to the difficulty with six out of eight of these guns. Pearl Harbor overhauled them, as I indicated to you, but said, at the time, that they doubted whether the overhaul would be successful because, in their opinion, there could be no proper overhaul unless the guns were lifted. They were correct for when we went into action against the enemy the same difficulty developed in four guns. We are now having these four guns lifted and it is hoped that they will operate satisfactorily at last. I understand that the Yard here is contemplating writing Mare Island a letter explaining the difficulty with these guns, because they have shown up on a number of the cruisers overhauled at your yard.

(b) Item Two: Crane. During our last operation the crane failed so badly that we were unable to pick up one of our planes. It failed first in elevation on our trip from the coast, and later on it failed in train. There is no doubt but that the driving motor is weak but it has always been weak. Heretofore, before our overhaul at Mare Island, it had been of sufficient strength to give satisfactory, if not suitable, operation. The Yard is now making a study of this crane and will probably find it necessary to lift it to find out what the difficulty is.

(c) Item Three: The outboard bulkheads around the Admiral's and Captain's Country are a little too light so that when the guns are trained aft and fired in that direction, the sheathing more or less flies off the bulkhead. I am now having my own cabin refinished without sheathing, except in the bathroom, and with fiber glass board replacing the present sheathing and aluminum. How effective this will be will only be determined through experience. I will let you know what luck we have.

I am afraid that I wasn't quite fair to Mare Island in my comparison between that Yard and this. I am afraid that the Yard here is undergoing the same difficulties that you are there - that is, considerable loafing, incompetence, and delay. A good part of the delay seems to be caused by the inadequate functioning of the Captain of the Yard's Office, which for some reason never seems to be quite right. As an estimate to the type of delay which I referred to, the Yard estimated four days to fix my cabin and we are

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0507

U. S. S. MINNEAPOLIS  
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

24 October 1943

today on the ninth day. I think that the fault does not lie with Roger Paine, but with the increasing number of ships being overhauled here and with the increasing shortage of competent personnel. If it will make you feel any better, Captain Hague, on the staff of Comservfor, says that your Yard is the best in the country because your estimates are much less than the others, especially in time, and because you are always ready to take on another job even though you are overloaded.

Before I left I told you and the Admiral that I would fire a couple salvos for the Mare Island Yard when I met the enemy and I have carried out my promise. The Mare Island salvos looked very good and seemed to have accomplished considerable devastation.

I talked to Admiral Dunn about the change in plans concerning Captain Malloy. He said that it wasn't Malloy's fault but was rather the fault of Cominch. He said further that Cominch indicated that there were probably many Rear Admirals under the Bureau of Ships who could and should fill his billet without having to send a Captain out here for the purpose of promoting him to Rear Admiral. Don't quote me on this, or Dunn either, but it seems to be a fact.

I am afraid that we are going to have to write a letter to you and ask that our truck be sent to us. It looks as though we are going to need it here. Certainly in recent days and weeks we could have used it advantageously.

Please remember me most kindly to Mary C., to the Admiral, to Captain Crisp, and to my other good friends around there, and as for yourself, my best regards.

As ever,

Your old friend,

UNCLASSIFIED

Richard W. Bates,  
Captain, U.S. Navy.

Captain W.D. Leggett, Jr., U.S.N.,  
Navy Yard,  
Mare Island, California.

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